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aim the well-being of the village. Both these cults emphasize for an individual his membership of a particular social group, the joint family in the one instance and the village community in the other.

Three other features of social structure have to be considered in connexion with the village cult. In the first place, though the whole village community takes part in the ceremonies, different caste groups have different parts to play and are thus differentiated. Some, for example, take part in the animal sacrifice, while others have nothing to do with it. Thus a caste group within the village is able, within the cult, to establish its own unity and its separation from other groups. This is a significant feature of the caste structure of the village.

In the second place, though each village community has its own unity as exhibited in the cult performances, there is co-operation between different villages, and members of one may take part in the ceremonies of another. Thus the Coorg villages are groups within a single Coorg religious community. It is therefore not only the solidarity of the village that is exhibited in the village cult but also the religious solidarity and unity of the people of Coorg.

Thirdly, there is the fact that the local deities of the villages have been assimilated to the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, as when a particular local deity is identified with Shiva or Pārvati. In this way the Coorg religious community has become incorporated as a part of that wider Hindu religious community. The incorporation, however, is only partial. In an orthodox Hindu cult the temple should be served by a Brahmin. Orthodox Hindu deities are vegetarian and dislike alcohol. But some of the Coorg village-deities demand the blood and flesh of animals and offerings of toddy. What Dr. Srinivas calls the process of Sanskritization of the Coorg village cults is therefore very far from being complete. There are very important remains of paganism. This need not surprise us when we remember the many survivals of local paganism in the Christian countries. What is significant is that in his participation in the worship of the village-deities the Coorg individual is able to think of himself as a member of the widespread Hindu religious community.

The individual in Coorg belongs to a particular joint-family, and to a particular village, but in addition he belongs by birth to a particular social group of the kind to which we apply the name

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of marriageable age marries a younger brother of her dead husband. Even if she does not do so, she stays in her husband's *okka* looking after the children. She goes out of her conjugal *okka* only if she marries a member of a different *okka*.

All the members of an *okka* are descended from a common ancestor. The spirits of the dead ancestors (*kāraṇavas*) are regarded with great reverence and propitiated periodically. It is believed that they continue to take an interest in the affairs of the *okka*. They expect the surviving members to look after the property and interests of the *okka*, to observe the rules of the moral code, and to show piety towards the various deities and themselves. They have the power to reward those who are pious and to punish with disease and misfortune those who are impious.

The eldest male member of the most senior agnatic branch is the head (*koruvukāra* or *paṭṭédāra*) of the *okka* whose properties he looks after and whose affairs he administers. The younger male members are called *kikkararu* and they have to obey the head in all matters concerning the *okka* as a whole. The head of the *okka* is usually also the eldest male member of it, and this union of headship and seniority in the same person results in his enjoying a great amount of power in domestic matters. Personal qualities such as hard work, sobriety, chastity, piety towards manes and gods, unselfishness and impartiality increase the headman's powers.

The headman's powers are balanced by his duties: he has to see that the expenses of the household are met, the members of the *okka* do not quarrel with each other, the ancestral lands are properly cultivated, and so on. He has always to weigh in his own mind how every act of his is regarded by the adult men in the *okka*. It is not known whether formerly every *okka* had a council composed of the adult men in it, but it is known definitely that when a headman proved himself very incompetent all the adult men in the *okka* met together and proceeded to elect a new headman. In the last seventy years the Karavanḍa *okka* twice elected new headmen to replace the existing ones. The right to replace an old but incompetent headman with a young and competent man is sanctioned by the Coorg saw (*paḷanjol* = old saying), '*ariyuvavanē periyavan*', which means 'the wisest is the eldest'. We call attention here to the equation of wisdom with seniority, an equation which is used even in replacing an old man by a young one.

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During the festival of Kētrappa at Bēngōr the Poleyas may not be seen by any high caste villager till the eighteenth day of the festival, but on the eighteenth evening they march in procession with pipe and drum to the Kētrappa temple and watch the ritual from a nearby knoll. They bring offerings of fowls to Kētrappa, and the birds are decapitated by Mēdas, who have an important part in the festival. The Kētrappa festival seems to be an extreme instance of the exclusion of Poleyas. In the festivals of other village-deities they participate to a greater extent, though on a different level from the rest.

Every village has an hereditary headman called *takka*. It is the headman's duty to see that the village greens (*mandus*) where dances and dinners are held, and the village assembly meets, are kept in good condition. He has to ensure that the bridges and ferries in the village are in constant repair and that the village tank is clean. He has to look after pilgrims and travellers passing through the village.

Coorgs have a keen appreciation of leadership and precedence. From their folklore it appears as though they are incapable of conceiving of any group, of no matter what, without a leader. The epithet consistently applied to a headman is '*mūpayanda*' which means 'precedence-having'. A sense of precedence and respect for seniority helped to introduce order into their meetings, just as a respect for precedents produced a consistent body of decisions on any particular matter.

Formerly a headman wielded great influence in his village (or *nāḍ*), and a good headman was a powerful factor for stability. If the headman was a bad man, the entire village was ruined: as a proverb has it, 'when the *takka* is a loafer the entire village is like the area inhabited by Untouchables'. In the management of village affairs and the settlement of village disputes the headman was assisted by an assembly consisting of the representatives of the various *okkas* in the village. The assembly was called *kūṭa*, which means a 'gathering' or 'group'. It met on one of the several greens in the village. There were separate village greens for transacting business (*panchāyati mandu*), for dancing at the harvest festival (*ūr mandu*), a third for dancing at the festival of the village-deity (*dēvara mandu*), and so on. Sometimes there was a roofed enclosure (*ambala*) on the green, which provided shelter from rain and sun for the assembly to meet, and for women to watch the dances.

The village-assemblies were far more powerful in the past than

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to dead ancestors, which are made in every Coorg house, are made in the kitchen alone instead of in the ancestor-shrine or anywhere else.

There are two types of houses in Coorg, one which has an open quadrangle in the middle and the other in which there is no such open quadrangle. In the former type, the four corners of the open quadrangle are supported by four pillars, and four planks (*aimaras*) connect the four pillars at a height of about 2½ feet from the ground. These planks are regarded as sacred: none may step across them, and no woman may sit on one of them.

Planks are affixed to the top of the parapet wall in the veranda. One of these planks is called the 'ancestors' plank' (*kāraṇavaṇda aimara*), and it is regarded as sacred. None may sleep on it. I have heard that anyone sleeping on the 'ancestors' plank' in the house of the Karavaṇda *okka* is thrown down to the floor by the spirits of the ancestors.

Women very rarely visit the veranda (*kaiyālé*), and when they visit it they may not sit on one of the planks there. Nor are they allowed to sit on the planks in the central hall, though very old women occasionally take the liberty of doing so when the senior males are away. On the second day of marriage the bride sits on a plank in the veranda of the groom's house, and this is part of the ritual of admitting her into her husband's house.

At some distance from the main building is a shrine (*kaimaḍa*) devoted to the worship of the ancestors. During the periodical ancestor-propitiations (*kāraṇava téré*), small figurines representing the ancestors are kept in the shrine and worshipped. During festivals, a lamp is lit in the shrine, and cooked food is placed before the lamp.

Kaimaḍas or ancestor-shrines seem to be a recent phenomenon, and before they became popular the dead ancestors were represented by unhewn stones fixed in earthen platforms which were built round the trunks of milk-exuding trees. These platforms were called '*kāraṇava taré*' or 'ancestors' platform'. Even today in Kiggaṭnāḍ there are only ancestor-platforms and no ancestor-*shrines*.

Like the ancestors, cobra-deities are represented by unhewn stones[1] and fixed in platforms built round the trunks of milk-exuding trees. The vegetation growing near a cobra-platform is

[1] Minor deities like Pūda and Guḷika are also represented by similar stones, and occasionally found alongside stones representing cobra-deities.

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776 778 considered sacred, and it is not permitted to cut it down. A woman in her periods is not allowed to go near the platform as cobra-deities are considered to be specially sensitive to defilement. If this rule is not respected, she, and probably the *okka* of which she is a member, will suffer misfortune. The cobra is a sacred creature and he who kills it will suffer from a skin disease like leucoderma.

243 778 There is an attitude of ritual respect towards the ancestral rice-field. This is specially noticeable when the crop is standing: a man may not wear sandals while walking through it, or hold an umbrella over his head, or whistle.

The rice-field is divided into a number of ridged-up plots and the central plot of the rice-field is regarded as particularly sacred. [846] Formerly it was the custom to bury the umbilical cord of the eldest son in the central plot. A man is supposed to have a special affinity to the place where his umbilical cord is buried. If a Coorg boy is found going to a particular place frequently, his elders twit him, [871] 'Is your umbilical cord buried there?' Nowadays the umbilical cord is buried in the yard of the palace of Mercara, or in a school-compound, because Coorgs want their sons to do well in examinations and become high government officials.

764 778 A part of the ancestral estate is used for burying or cremating the dead members of the *okka*. The part where corpses are buried is called *kēkaḷa* while the adjoining part used for cremation is called *tūṭangaḷa*.[1] It is sacred, but in an undesirable way: the term 'bad-sacred' has been used to denote such a ritual condition. (Bad-sacredness includes within itself both 'defilement and 'inauspiciousness'.) A visit to the burial-ground defiles a person and a bath [783] is necessary to restore him to normal ritual status.

764 775 The burial-ground for children may be near the house, whereas that for adults must be as far away as possible. The ghosts of adults [858] are harmful, while children's ghosts are comparatively harmless. An adult has a social personality, whereas a child does not have one. An adult occupies a social role or several social roles. The ghost of a headman or hero or a particularly evil man is more powerful than [765] that of an ordinary man. The mourning-period also varies according to age and social importance of the deceased.

[1] Amongst Coorgs, the corpses of elders and important people are cremated, [564] while the corpses of children and unimportant people are buried. The Brahmins, however, cremate all dead persons except infants, and in many parts of south India castes which want to rise in status give up burial for cremation.

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V

It is not only places which have ritual value, but also points of the compass. East is a sacred direction because the sun rises there, and Hindus in all parts of India regard the sun as a deity.

The ancestral house faces east and so does the ancestor-shrine. The lip of the sacred wall-lamp in the central hall faces east. The subject of a *mangala* ceremony sits facing east.

On getting up from his bed in the morning a Coorg salutes the wall-lamp and the sun. The cultivation of rice is accompanied by ritual at every stage, and on all these ritual occasions the subject of the rites begins by saluting the sun.

South is an inauspicious or bad-sacred direction. A corpse is buried or cremated with its head towards south. In Sanskritic Hinduism, south is the abode of Yama, the god of death.

Coorgs, like Hindus in other parts of India, regard east as a good-sacred direction and south as a bad-sacred direction. East is associated with Chūriya (sun-god), and south with Yama. Both these deities have an All-India spread. Coorgs worship these two deities along with other Hindus all over India. The possession of common values binds people together and Coorgs form a single community with Hindus all over India when they worship the same deities.

VI

Mūrta is the crucial part of *mangala*, and the rites performed prior to *mūrta* prepare the subject for it. The subject is shaved by the barber, given a bath by three married women, and dressed in ritual robes and ornaments before sitting down to *mūrta*. Shaving, the first of several preparatory rites, will be briefly considered here.

It is necessary to repeat here that shaving is done by barbers who form a caste. Contact with the barber defiles a member of a higher caste, and consequently shaving is invariably followed by a purificatory bath.

The subject of *mangala* wears a white cotton *kupya* while he is being shaved by the barber. The *kupya* is like a dressing-gown, and it is either black or white. The white gown is of cotton, has long sleeves, and covers the neck up to the throat. This is the traditional ritual dress of Coorgs. The black gown is a Westernized version of

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372 a ritual attitude towards the kitchen stove. A few embers from the
783 kitchen stove and a few grains of cooked rice from a vessel on the stove are put into a dining-dish. Water is poured on the embers and rice, and a thick, ashy liquid is formed in the dining-dish. This liquid is *teḷi nīr*, and great protective powers are attributed to it. The mourners returning home on the eleventh day after performing the rites in the burial-ground, a daughter-in-law returning to her conjugal home with her baby born in her natal home, a member of the house returning from a long journey, and a newly bought calf are all sprinkled with it.

783 In the foregoing instances *teḷi nīr* removes some inimical or
778 dangerous power in the person or object that is coming into the house. People who are 'strangers' to the *okka* have this power in
[609] them. A child of a male member of the *okka* born in its mother's
372 natal house, a newly bought calf, a member long absent from home,
596 and a mourner are all 'strangers' for purposes of *teḷi nīr*. Members of the *okka* enjoy its protection and strength while persons and objects outside it do not do so. Things that stand for the *okka* represent its strength and protective power, and the kitchen stove is an appropriate object to stand for the *okka*. The embers and the cooked rice are both taken from the kitchen stove. The kitchen stove and the dining-dish also stand for commensality which is a basic feature of the *okka* in every part of India. In fact, commensality is a legal criterion of 'jointness'. Commensality denotes the unity and strength of the *okka*. Commensality is an act of solidarity. Absence of commensality indicates division. In a country like India where all kinds of ritual rules surround eating, commensality assumes even greater importance than what it would have in another society.

372 The domestic lamp, as long as it is burning, indicates that the
776 protective power of the *okka* is active, and its going out indicates
171 the withdrawal of such protective power. Such withdrawal spells dangers to the members of the *okka*. The domestic lamp led to a consideration of the significance of the kitchen stove, and this in turn led to a consideration of fire generally and the sun. In Sanskritic or All-India Hinduism, Agni is the god of fire and he is related to Sāvitār or Sūrya, the sun-god. Agni and Sūrya are deities in the Vēdas and they are known and understood all over Hindu India. The local phenomenon of the attribution of sacredness to the domestic lamp and kitchen stove is absorbed into the

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All-India worship of Agni and Sūrya.[1] Coorgs are drawn into an All-India ritual idiom which is mainly Sanskritic in character.

X

The sprinkling of rice on a person or thing is a common ritual act in Coorg, and it is one of the several acts which together form the ritual of *mūrta*. An instance of the ritual sprinkling of rice will be considered now with a view to discovering its meaning.

Birth results in pollution for the mother, the new-born infant, and the *okka* of which the mother is a member. While the other members of the polluted *okka* attain normal ritual status on the twelfth day of birth, the mother herself remains polluted till the sixtieth day. On that day, after a bath which ends her long period of pollution, she performs a certain ritual which signifies her resumption of her normal, pre-pollution duties.

One of her normal duties is the bringing of water from the domestic well into the kitchen, and the resumption of this particular duty is dramatized in '*Ganga pūja*' (worship of Ganga or Ganges). The confined woman has a bath, after which she changes into ritually pure garments. She then goes to the domestic well accompanied by two married women. First of all she salutes the sun by throwing some rice grains into the air, and this is followed by putting small quantities of rice thrice into the well. She then drops a few betel leaves, with the smooth side on top, into the well, and also empties the milk of a slit coconut into it. Finally, the confined woman and, after her, her two companions draw water from the well in vessels and carry the latter into the kitchen.

During the later stages of pregnancy, and for two months after the birth of the child, the confined woman has been freed from all domestic duties. The resumption of her domestic duties on the sixtieth day of the birth of the child is dramatized in the ritual of '*Ganga pūja*'. Her relationship with the domestic well has been broken for some time and the resumption of this relationship is not without a certain amount of 'awkwardness', as in the case of two human beings. The worship of the domestic well, the solidarity rites performed towards it, the offering of betel leaves and a coconut all make the process of resumption of contact smoother.

[1] It may be argued, however, that the attribution of sacredness to the domestic lamp and stove is derived from the worship of Agni and Sūrya, and not vice versa.

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representations of ancestors made which they deposit in the river Kāvēri at the end of the propitiation. Sometimes personal possessions of the ancestors such as walking-sticks or the small Coorg sword called *piché katti* are kept in the shrine during the ancestor-propitiation.

Ordinarily the ancestor-shrine does not contain sculptured images, or unhewn stones, representing the ancestors of the *okka*. But during an ancestor-propitiation wooden or other figurines representing ancestors might be kept in the ancestor-shrine. In those parts of Coorg where there are no ancestor-shrines, every house has an earthen platform built round the trunk of a milk-exuding tree, and a rough, unhewn stone embedded in the platform stands for all the ancestors of the *okka* collectively. An unhewn stone embedded in an earthen platform might also stand for a deity like Pūda, Guḷika, Kētrappa, and Nāta (cobra-deity).[1]

Some Coorgs consider that the ancestor-shrine or platform is built over the grave of the Founder of the *okka*, and that the cobra-platform is built at a spot where a cobra breathed its last. There is no evidence to support either of these views.

Ancestor-platforms are the rule in Kiggaṭnāḍ in south-east Coorg. It has been mentioned that Kiggaṭnāḍ has a great deal in common with Kannaḍa culture, and contrasts with Nālknāḍ and Kaḍiyetnāḍ in the south-west which are influenced by Malabar. The Baṇṇas and Paṇikas, masters of the technique of ancestor-propitiation in a Coorg house, are both Malayāḷam-speaking castes and their influence normally does not penetrate as far east as Kiggaṭnāḍ. The elaborate propitiation of ancestors, with the Baṇṇas or Paṇikas acting as oracles of the dead ancestors, does not prevail in Kiggaṭnāḍ: in the latter area propitiation is restricted to the offer of meat and liquor.

Ancestor-shrines or *kaimaḍas* are found in Coorg to the south-west of Mercara, but they are far from universal. Moegling, writing in 1855, tells us that only 'seven of the Armēri [village near Vīrarājpēṭ] houses have regular little temples where *kōla* or *bhāraṇi* is performed'.[2] Even today several prosperous and well-

[1] All over south India village-deities like Māri are frequently represented by rough unhewn stones. The Coorg instance is only a part of a wider phenomenon spreading over south India, but there are other features which link up Coorg especially with Malabar and South Canara.

[2] *Coorg Memoirs*, p. 62.

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769 exist cheek by jowl as far as the bulk of Coorgs are concerned.
782 The more inquiring of the men see the two modes of propitiation
184 as mutually inconsistent, but such an inconsistency does not seriously trouble anyone. All over India Sanskritic and non-Sanskritic customs, often involving beliefs regarded as mutually inconsistent, are found existing together. Usually, the non-Sanskritic custom either drops out or is transformed to suit the Sanskritic custom, but this process takes a very long time. There is also no doubt, however, that the non-Sanskritic customs of every caste as well as those of sects and peripheral groups are continually being Sanskritized. This has been happening for over 2,000 years all over India.

Splinter groups like Amma Coorgs are decades, if not centuries, in advance of their parent-groups: the former have solved their problem by Sanskritizing their customs entirely while the latter are more conservative. Sometimes the splinter groups are so far in advance of their neighbours that they incur the wrath of everyone. They might even be ostracized by the other castes.

XV

776 It has already been mentioned that every *okka* has a *nāta*, which
778 is a platform where unhewn stones representing cobra-deities are embedded. Vegetation is allowed to grow freely around this plat-
562 form. There is a ban on women approaching the cobra-platform during their periods as the cobra-deities are extremely sensitive to impurity of any sort. Though women no longer observe seclusion during their periods, they are even now afraid of going near the cobra-platform because of the belief that its defilement would result in some misfortune to their *okka*. The angered cobra-deity
[539] may be roused to bite a member. This is clearly seen in the ancient saw, 'The deceit of women is very great, O, Snake, please do not bite us' (*pommakkaḍa māya marmāya pāmbē, ariyaté tiriyaté koriyaté pāmbē*): a member prays to the cobra-deity not to bite even though it has been angered by women going near the cobra-platform during their periods. Women are likely to conceal such violations
[783] from others, especially males. If they are frank enough to tell what they have done, purificatory and expiatory rites could be performed
776 to appease the cobra-deity.
778 Among Hindus all over India, cobras and the ant-hills in which

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they live are worshipped on certain occasions. In south India there is a belief that a cobra lives to a very great age, and that as it gets older its tail becomes shorter. During the last period of its life it is said to develop wings. Coorgs share these beliefs, and some of them assert that a cobra-platform is built above the spot where a cobra ended its earthly existence.

All over India there is a reluctance to kill the cobra even though it is a dangerous creature. Coorgs abstain from killing cobras found in temples and believed to be harmless, whereas they do not hesitate to kill cobras found outside temples.

The following incident is significant: *A*'s brother did not consider it a sin to kill cobras. He one day found two cobras copulating and shot one of them dead. Several years passed without *A*'s brother obtaining a son. Some Brahmins told him that he had committed a great sin in killing a sacred creature like the cobra and that he would not have a son till he had performed the necessary expiatory ritual. They further told him that the sin was so great that even after he had performed the expiatory ritual no more than one son would be born to him. He duly performed the necessary expiatory ritual under the guidance of Brahmin priests, and later he made a pilgrimage to the great cobra-shrine of Subramaṇya in the Tuḷu country. Sometime afterwards his wife gave birth to a son, and together with his wife and son he again visited the shrine of Subramaṇya to express his gratitude to the deity.

Formerly, in the month of Scorpio, lamps were lit before the cobra-platform every evening. In addition, in a few Coorg *okkas*, a Brahmin priest visited the platform and worshipped the cobra-deity, using Sanskrit *mantras*.

In the cobra-worship of Coorgs are to be found certain elements which are common to Hindus all over India, others confined to Hindus in Peninsular India, and yet others which are found only in Malabar, South Canara, and Coorg. The worship of cobras takes certain forms in Malabar which are very similar to those in Coorg: in the former area it is common to find in the houses of high-caste Hindus a shrine for cobras in the south-western corner of the large compound round the ancestral house. The cobra-deities in a house are intimately associated with it. The vegetation growing around a cobra-platform may not be cut down, and no one in a condition of ritual impurity may approach the platform.

In the Kannaḍa, Tamil, and Telugu countries, on the other

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hand, cobra-worship has a different orientation. In each village or locality, a platform is built round a peepul-tree (*ficus religiosa*) and on this platform are kept sculptured images of single snakes, or of two intertwined snakes. Such a platform is worshipped by all the people in the locality.

Cobra-worship among Coorgs has the same orientation it has in Malabar but for one important difference: in Malabar the deity Subramaṇya does not seem to be connected with cobras, whereas everywhere else in south India cobras are identified with Subramaṇya, the second son of Shiva. Shrines dedicated to Subramaṇya, some of them well-known centres of pilgrimage, are commonly found in south India.

The identification of cobras with Subramaṇya demonstrates the way in which Sanskritic Hinduism operates. The worship of cobras is very popular among all Hindus, and the identification of cobras with Subramaṇya provides a door for the entry of Sanskritic Hinduism. People who until then had only been worshipping cobras came to know about Subramaṇya, the son of Shiva. They also learn of the story of Subramaṇya's birth, which is a tiny slice of Hindu mythology; and of Shiva, his relation to other gods like Vishṇu and Brahma, and so on. Pilgrimages to shrines dedicated to Subramaṇya became popular, and these shrines again are a source for the further spread of Sanskritic Hinduism. There are usually myths about these shrines and each such myth tells the pilgrim a little more about Sanskritic Hinduism.

Stones representing Pūda and Guḷika are frequently found in the compound of a Coorg's house. Pūda is the Tamil corruption of the Sanskritic *bhūta*, which means a spirit. Pūda is frequently one of the deities in a village temple.

Guḷika in the Tamil country is the name of one of the eight serpents supporting the earth in Hindu mythology. In Malabar and Coorg, however, he is better known as the son of Saturn. He is also referred to as Māndi.

Guḷika is associated with death: a man is supposed to see Guḷika just before dying. Horoscopes drawn up in Malabar and Coorg show the position of Guḷika, and this is said to indicate when the native is going to die. When a number of deaths take place in a Coorg's house it is customary to plant a stone called Mrityu Guḷika (death Guḷika). This is believed to put an end to the deaths.

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Gulika is different from Kūḷi which merely means a spirit or ghost. Kūḷis are troublesome spirits which cause illness, possess people, and have to be propitiated with offerings of food and drink.

XVI

The ancestral house has a special importance to a Coorg: he regards it as sacred, he is bound by very powerful ties to it, and he considers it the proper place where the marriage of a member should be celebrated and where his funeral should be performed. Even today the various branches of an *okka* gather together at the ancestral house during the harvest festival and during the Kāvēri festival. They also gather together for the festival of the local village-deity which may be held annually or biennially, and for the performance of ancestor-propitiation.

The house is swept and cleaned every day, and on special ritual occasions such as a festival or ancestor-propitiation, its walls are colour-washed, and the floor washed with a solution of cow-dung, a common purifying agent all over India. A festival is also a holiday, and the men abstain from agricultural work and perform festival tasks such as hanging up festoons of mango leaves on the lintel above the main door. Everyone has a bath and changes into clean clothes brought by the washerman. A festival also means a feast and the feast may be either vegetarian or non-vegetarian. All over south India the feasts which are a part of calendar festivals may not include non-vegetarian dishes—this is an idea implicit in Sanskritic Hinduism. Non-Brahmins usually prepare non-vegetarian dishes on the day following the feast.

Coorgs follow other Hindus in preparing purely vegetarian dishes on festival days. Even the ancestors are offered vegetarian dishes at these calendar festivals. But on those occasions which are exclusively devoted to the worship of ancestors meat and pork dishes and arrack are the preferred offerings to them. Some village-deities again require offerings of non-vegetarian dishes and liquor at festivals in their honour.

Another aspect of calendar festivals needs to be referred to here: festivals such as the festival of arms and the harvest festival include games like shooting at a target, running a race, throwing a stone, &c. These games prove an occasion for the expression of the rivalry that exists between the *okkas* in a village or *nāḍ*. Such an

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VI

THE CULTS OF THE LARGER SOCIAL UNITS

I

796 634 THERE is a considerable body of ritual directly referring to the *okka*, but this is not the case when we come to larger social units such as the village (*ūr*), *nāḍ* (each consisting of a few villages), and *sīmé* or *dēsha* (each consisting of a few *nāḍs*). These large social units were never as closely-knit as the *okka*. The festivals of the village-deities constitute an important source of information on these units, even though only a small part of each festival refers directly to them. Of the calendar festivals, only the harvest festival is important. The festivals of the village-deities, the harvest festival, and folklore are the chief sources for this chapter.

621 796 346 776 A 'village-deity' does not necessarily mean the deity of a single village. In fact it is common to find two or three villages combining to celebrate the festival of a village-deity. There is usually more than one deity at the festival of a village-deity. Every temple in a village usually contains more than one deity, one chief deity from whom the temple derives its name, and the rest secondary. For instance, the Kundat Bhadrakāḷi temple in Kuklūr derives its name from the fact that the chief deity in the temple is Bhadrakāḷi. There is a shrine containing her image, and the other deities in this shrine are Ganēsha, Sārtāvu (Ayyappa), and a *linga* (representing Shiva) said to have been brought from Benares. Outside the shrine, but inside the temple compound, are stones representing Ayyappa, Pattu Kūṭ Pātāḷa (literally, ten spirits of the underworld), and Kuṭṭatammé (the mother of Kuṭṭa).[1] Besides these, the Poleyas of Kuklūr keep representations of some deities worshipped exclusively by them, outside the temple compound on an improvised platform. All the deities in Kuklūr are considered to be subordinate to Bhadrakāḷi. Very frequently there is more than one temple in a village. In Armēri in Beppunāḍ, for instance, there are

[1] Kuṭṭatammé has a temple to herself in Kuṭṭa in south Coorg. She is a famous deity and an annual festival is held in her honour.

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several temples: one dedicated to Bhagavati, another to Mahādēva, two to Ayyappa, and six to Raktēshwari (identified with Chamuṇḍi). The temples dedicated to Bhagavati, Mahādēva, and Ayyappa have Brahmin priests who worship the deities by using Sanskrit *mantras*, whereas those dedicated to Raktēshwari do not have Brahmin priests, and pigs are sacrificed annually to her. There are two modes of worship, the Sanskritic and non-Sanskritic, and in the festival of a village-deity these two modes are found mixed in varying proportions.

Usually there is more than one temple in a village, and a temple contains more than one deity. The temples in a village might be either Sanskritic or non-Sanskritic, or might represent varying degrees of compromise between the two elements. Finally, a village-deity might also be the deity of more than one village.

The festival of a village-deity requires a certain amount of co-operation between the various temples in a village, and not infrequently between villages. For instance, the festivals of the various deities in a village are so arranged that they do not clash if not actually dovetail. The festivals of the deities Kētrappa and Chaunḍi in Bēngūr occur at the same time, but they dovetail remarkably considering the elaborateness of the ritual that is performed. A kind of offering known as *térémuḍi* (usually a man wearing *téré* equipment) is sent by both the Bhagavati (in common parlance, Povvedi) and Chaunḍi temples to the Kētrappa temple on the eighteenth day (which is also called the *namme* or 'festival day') of the biennial Kētrappa festival.

A few miles from Bēngūr is Balmāvṭi, which has an important temple dedicated to Bhagavati (Povvedi). This deity also has a very elaborate biennial festival, similar to Kētrappa's, but the interesting point is that the two festivals are performed in alternate years. When the 'big festival' of Kētrappa is being performed, Bhagavati of Balmāvṭi has a 'small festival', and vice versa. That is to say, this arrangement implies some co-operation between Begunāḍ and Ballatnāḍ. This is all the more surprising as formerly there was a feud (*maradalé*) between these two *nāḍs*, and this feud seems to have been a long and bitter one.

There is another type of co-operation to which reference must be made here. The Baṇṇas and Maléyas who officiate as oracles and dancers (wearing *téré*) at the festival of Kētrappa come from the villages Saṇṇa Pulikōṭu and Balmāvti respectively. The services of

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621 Baṇṇas and Maléyas are in demand in surrounding villages, but
796 they manage to fulfil all their ritual engagements. Similarly,
535 Paṇikas from the village Biḷigunda officiate at the festival of
791 Kundat Bhadrakāḷi. These Paṇikas too are very busy people, serving as they do a number of villages. But the people of Kuklūr have ensured their services by giving them, in the past, an advance (*iḍu*) of Rs50 and two gold bangles. This is paid in addition to the customary fees paid after every festival. The payment of the advance guarantees the Paṇika's attendance and service at the festival. It is clear that the Paṇika or Baṇṇa or Maléya can only fulfil his engagements if the festivals do not clash with each other. The Baṇṇa is essential at the festival of a village-deity, and it is perhaps his list of engagements which ensures co-operation between the villages he serves.

796 The saying 'kētrappang pātradoḍané', meaning 'the entire pot
776 of toddy for Kētrappa', testifies to the deity Kētrappa's great liking
273 for toddy. Part of the ritual of the festival of Kētrappa consists in fetching toddy from the Kopaṭṭi hills, about seven miles from Bēngūr. The Kuḍiyas (a tribe) in the Kopaṭṭi hills tap the toddy, and the festival-priests go to the Kopaṭṭi hills on the seventh day of the festival carrying new earthen pots (*kaléyas*) filled with paddy, which is the perquisite of the Kuḍiyas. These pots are brought back on the sixteenth day, and toddy is offered to Kētrappa and other deities in Bēngūr on the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth days. The Kuḍiyas visit the Kētrappa temple on the eighteenth day to offer their homage to the deity, watch the ritual, and receive a share of meat and toddy.

Every priestly (*kāvukāra*) *okka* in Bēngūr sends at least one representative to the Kopaṭṭi hills on the seventh day. They all leave the village at about 4 a.m., after taking a bath in cold water and donning ritually pure robes. They are in a condition of purity and other villagers may not look at them till they have crossed the boundary of the village. Both when they go to deposit the pots and to bring back the pots full with toddy some esoteric ritual takes
[787] place in the Kopaṭṭi hills. The festival-priests are very secretive about it, but I learn that all the ritual centres round the possession of a Kuḍiya oracle by Ayyappa, a deity of the Kuḍiyas in the Kopaṭṭi hills.

796 The festival necessarily implies co-operation between Bēngūr people and a hill tribe living in inaccessible hills covered with

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heavy jungle. A festival of a village-deity usually implies co-operation with the people of another village or *nāḍ*, or with certain castes or tribes living in different villages or *nāḍs*.

II

Village-deities are an All-India phenomenon. By this it is meant that the deities who are worshipped in villages in various parts of India have more or less the same character and attributes, and that the technique of propitiating them is broadly similar. These statements no doubt sound vague and general, but any attempt to make them more precise will have to take account of exceptions at every point.

While the phenomenon is broadly similar all over India, there are important regional variations. Generally speaking, within India, each region or district has a greater unity than the larger area of which it is a part. Inside peninsular India, for instance, each linguistic area represents an area of greater cultural homogeneity and social solidarity. But there are also cultural forms which are common to two or more linguistic areas. Malayāḷam and Tamil areas have certain cultural forms in common; and similarly Kannaḍa, Telugu, and Marāṭhi areas have some cultural forms in common. Within each linguistic area too there are differences: cultural forms present in the centre of a linguistic area might not be present in the peripheral regions or present only in an altered form. Geographical barriers also usually represent cultural barriers. For instance, cultural forms found in the Malabar littoral strip have great difficulty in spreading into the mainland of peninsular India. A country like Coorg, which lies at the periphery of three linguistic areas, Kannaḍa, Malayāḷam, and Tuḷu, has certain cultural forms in common with each of them.

Throughout peninsular India village-deities are represented by unhewn stones or by crude images of stone or wood. They are either housed in shrines which are usually not very elaborate, or simply embedded in the earth without any roof above them. A shrine dedicated to a village-deity is frequently found either at the foot of a tree or in the shade of a grove. Worship may or may not be offered daily at these shrines. There is no uniform rule applicable in this matter. Practice varies from village to village, and even from temple to temple: in some temples worship (*pūja*) is

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offered every day, in others once a week, while still others come to life only annually or once every few years, when the festival of the deity is being celebrated. Such a festival usually lasts several days and culminates in the sacrifice of fowl, sheep, goats, and buffaloes. Devotees walk barefoot across fire, gash themselves with swords, and so on, on the last day of the festival.

While the priests at the Sanskritic temples are usually[1] Brahmins, men belonging to one of the non-Brahmin castes are frequently priests at the temples dedicated to village-deities. Here again practice varies from region to region, village to village, and temple to temple. For instance, in Coorg, Brahmins from South Canara are commonly priests at temples dedicated to village-deities. In Mysore and the Tamil country, on the other hand, a member of a non-Brahmin caste is normally priest at the temple of a village-deity.

Throughout peninsular India, excluding Kēraḷa, Māri is a common village-deity. She presides over epidemic diseases such as plague, smallpox, and cholera, which usually occur in summer. The propitiation of Māri with offerings and festival takes place in summer, and also whenever plague or cholera or smallpox breaks out.

Village-deities in peninsular India are frequently females. This is specially true of the area east of the Western Ghats. Ellamma (literally 'boundary-mother') is a familiar deity in Telugu and Tamil villages. Kāḷi is another familiar goddess.

All village-deities are not, however, goddesses: there are also gods. Ayyanār, for instance, is a very popular god in Tamil villages and he keeps watch on the village when the villagers are asleep. Bīrēdēvaru is a popular god in Kannaḍa villages.

All over peninsular India, with the exception of the Malayāḷam-speaking areas, bull buffaloes are favourite animals for sacrifice to village-deities. In the Malayāḷam-speaking areas, however, the favourite animals for sacrifice are the pig, goat, sheep, and fowl. The south-western part of Coorg shares numerous cultural forms with Malabar, and there the bull buffalo is not sacrificed to village-deities. In the eastern and northern parts, however, buffaloes are sacrificed to village-deities, especially Māri. But

[1] I say 'usually' and not 'invariably' because sometimes there are non-Brahmin priests at the shrines of Sanskritic deities. For instance, in many temples dedicated to Shiva in one or other of his numerous forms there are Lingāyaṭ priests.

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several years ago, in some villages near Mercara, Coorgs successfully opposed the sacrifice of bull buffaloes to Māri on the ground that buffaloes were the same as cows and the slaughter of cows (and oxen) should not be allowed under any circumstances. It is interesting to note that elsewhere in south India a similar reverence for cattle did not prevent the sacrifice of bull buffaloes to village-deities. Very recently, however, the local leaders of the Indian National Congress have been everywhere more or less successfully opposing the propitiation of village-deities with blood-offerings.

The most common village-deities in Coorg are Bhagavati (Povvedi) and Ayyappa (or Shasta). The former is male and the latter female. Several other deities such as Chaunḍi or Chāmunḍi (f.), Kāḷi, (f.), and Kētrappa (or Kshētrapāla (m.)) are also occasionally found as village-deities.

All the above deities are also commonly found in Malabar and South Canara. The traditional songs which are sung in Coorg at the festivals of village-deities make the latter out to be immigrants from Malabar or South Canara.[1] In these folksongs an important deity coming from Malabar or South Canara into Coorg usually brings with him a few minor deities who meet him on the way and beg of him to find them shelter in Coorg. Sometimes deities who come from Malabar go round to the established temples in Coorg such as the source of the river Kāvēri, and Sārtāvu (Ayyappa) temple in Makki, the Subramaṇya temple at Pāḍi, &c., and beg one of these latter deities for shelter.

The song sung at the festival of Kētrappa tells the story of the coming of Kētrappa into Bēngūr from Malabar: a party of Bēngūr youths led by Kallumāḍa Ayyaṇṇa go in a caravan to Māḍāyi in Malabar, and the leader is possessed by the deity Kētrappa while returning to Coorg after selling the rice carried by the caravan. The song tells us that a number of deities, viz. Pattu Kūṭ Pātāḷa, Povvedi (or Bhagavati), Chaunḍi, and Pūda request Kētrappa (represented by his oracle Kallumāḍa Ayyaṇṇa) to grant them shelter. Kētrappa promises them shelter and settles them in Bēngūr and surrounding places such as Ivattu-okkalu, Heravanāḍ, and the Kopaṭṭi Hills.

It is obvious that these folksongs cannot be treated as accurate

[1] Frequently the songs tell us that a group of deities set out from the mythical Milk Sea. It is interesting to note that in such cases they reach some town on the Malabar Coast first and then proceed to Coorg.

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776 historical records. Contradictions occur quite frequently in them. 171 And it is also clear that they are Coorg attempts at 'explain- 533 ing' the fact of the existence of a number of deities in the villages with which they deal. These various deities and their festivals are brought into relation with each other, and one of the deities made out to be the leader of the rest. In another song this leadership might be claimed for a different deity in a different village.

It is clear from these songs that not only do Coorg, Malabar, and South Canara share certain common cultural and ritual forms, but that some of these have come from Malabar and South Canara into Coorg. The fact that Tuḷu-speaking Brahmins from South Canara are priests at very many temples in Coorg, and that Coorgs had (and have) considerable respect for them, helped the spread of Tuḷu and Sanskritic cultural and ritual forms in Coorg. Similarly, the Kaṇiya (astrologer) and Baṇṇa and Paṇika were responsible for the spread of Malayāḷam and Sanskritic cultural and ritual forms in Coorg. This does not mean that Malayāḷam and Tuḷu areas do not have some cultural forms in common. Nor does it mean that the cultural and ritual forms found among Coorgs should always, or even in the majority of cases, be attributed to diffusion from without.

177 Formerly, Coorgs used to go to Malabar to learn medicine and magic, and such Coorgs, on their return, seem to have exercised considerable influence and power over their countrymen. The ancestor of the Ajjikuṭṭira *okka*, Kaliyāṭanḍa Ponnappa (alias Ajjappa), and Chendappanḍa Kungu are all reputed to have learnt 437 magic and medicine in Malabar, and after their death they became culture-heroes. It should be remembered in this connexion that formerly a few Coorgs from every village in south-west Coorg went annually in caravans to Malabar to sell their rice in exchange for goods which they wanted. These trade expeditions also resulted in the spread of cultural forms from one area to another.

776 A deity is commonly known by reference to the village in which he has a shrine. For instance, Pannangālatammé is the 'Mother of the village Pannangāla', Pālūrappa is the 'Father of the village Pālūr', Tumbémalédēra is the 'Lord of the Tumbé hill', and so on. Even where a deity is referred to by his or her name, a prefix is usually added stating to which village the particular deity belongs: for instance, Povvedi of Ballatnāḍ is usually referred to as Ballatnāḍ Povvedi, Bhadrakāḷi of Kunda is referred to as Kundat Bhadrakāḷi,

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Sārtāvu of Makki is referred to as Makki Sārtāvu, and so on. Frequently, the name by which a deity is popularly known gives no clue as to his Sanskritic affiliations: the deity Pālūrappa is said to be 'really' Vishṇu, but he is ordinarily referred to by the former name. Kuṭṭatammé means the 'Mother of Kuṭṭa' (a village in south Coorg), and this is the name by which the deity is popularly known. The deity's 'real' name is Karīn Kāḷi (Black Kāḷi), who is identified with one of the manifestations or forms of Parvati, wife of Shiva.

But it is not always that the popular name hides the Sanskritic affiliations of a deity: Bhadrakāḷi, Chāmuṇḍi, Povvedi (Bhagavati), Mādēva (Mahādēva), &c., have obvious Sanskritic affiliations, though such affiliations may not be known to all or even most of the devotees.

Nowhere in India are the village-deities regarded as gentle. This applies to Coorg too. The deity Madērappa settles down in the village Madé, and immediately flowers wither, sown seeds fail to sprout, and babies die in cradles. Another village-deity says that she will reward those who propitiate her and shoot an arrow at those who refuse to. In return for propitiation the deities keep away from the village and *nāḍ* epidemics such as plague, cholera, and smallpox, and grant children, good crops, and longevity. They also offer protection from ghosts and minor spirits who possess and harm human beings. The oracle of the deity acts as exorcist at the festival of the deity.

Sanskritic Hinduism, which is also All-India Hinduism, makes out village gods to be manifestations of Shiva, and village goddesses to be manifestations of Shiva's wife, Pārvati. The implications of such a systematization will be considered later.

III

The domestic and temple architecture of Coorgs seems to have been modelled on that of Malabar. This is only natural as most of the artisan castes in Coorg Proper are immigrants from Malabar.

While Coorg houses are extremely substantial structures, temples dedicated to village-deities are usually small and unimpressive buildings. But the well-known temples dedicated to Brahminical or Sanskritic deities are substantial, as formerly rich devotees liked building solid and massive temples for their patron-deities.

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316 Lucky indeed were the deities who could count the Rājas of Coorg as their devotees. The Bhaganḍēshwara temple in Bhāgamanḍla, Omkārēshwara temple in Mercara, the Kundat Bhadrakāḷi temple in Kuklūr, and many others have benefited from the munificence of the Rājas.

316 793 The construction of a temple is accompanied by elaborate ritual, and the Tantri Brahmins of South Canara are masters of this ritual. The folksongs frequently refer to a Tantri Brahmin being sent for to supervise the performance of the ritual surrounding the construction of a temple. The Tantri himself knows how to set images more firmly in their bases, revivify deities who have lost power, and so on.

793 796 It is usually a Brahmin from either South Canara or Malabar who is priest at temples dedicated to Bhagavati (Povvedi). Worship is offered to the deity at least once every day in temples where Brahmins are priests. There are, however, temples in which a member of one of the non-Brahmin castes is priest. For instance, a Kannaḍa-speaking Okkaliga is priest at the temple of Kuṭṭatammé in Kuṭṭa; and similarly, the deity Kētrappa has a Coorg priest.

● [776] Quite apart from this, in almost every village the very low castes (Mēda and Poleya) have their own deities who are not usually worshipped by the higher castes. The latter refer to such a deity as, for instance, 'Mēdara Ayyappa' (Mēdas' Ayyappa), 'Poleyara dēvaru' (Poleyas' deities), and so on.

The position may be summed up thus: (1) there are first of all temples dedicated to Sanskritic deities, with Brahmin priests, at which only vegetarian offerings are made, and these deities are worshipped by all the high castes.[1] Until recently, Untouchables were not being admitted to such temples. Now, legally, they are entitled to enter them. (2) There are temples where Brahmins are normally priests, the offerings normally vegetarian, and the mode of worship Sanskritic, but on certain occasions such as the festival of the deity the Brahmin withdraws and animals are decapitated before the deity by a non-Brahmin. The Brahmin priest re-enters the temple only after purifying it. (3) Temples where non-Brahmins are priests. Brahmins usually do not have anything to do in such a temple, but lay Brahmins may propitiate such a deity during an

[1] This ignores, however, the distinction into Shaivism and Vaishṇavism, and the fact that the orthodox followers of the one do not generally go to the temples of the other.

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Sanskritic Hinduism also integrates Hindus in Coorg with Hindus in other parts of India. Coorgs and other Hindus in every part of Coorg worship Sanskritic deities like the Kāvēri. Hindus outside Coorg also go on pilgrimage to the source of the Kāvēri on the first of Libra. This makes clear to Coorgs that they are part of a wider community which worships the Kāvēri. Similarly the pilgrimages of Coorgs to certain famous centres of pilgrimage outside Coorg brings them into contact with Hindus speaking different languages and observing different customs, but who all worship certain common deities.

Sanskritic Hinduism gives, then, certain common values to all Hindus, and the possession of common values knits people together into a community. The spread of Sanskritic rites, and the increasing Sanskritization of non-Sanskritic rites, tend to weld the hundreds of sub-castes, sects, and tribes all over India into a single community. The lower castes have a tendency to take over the customs and rites of the higher castes, and this ensures the spread of Sanskritic cultural and ritual forms at the expense of others.

The majority of village-deities in Coorg have Sanskritic names: Bhagavati (Povvedi), Chāmuṇḍi, Chauṇḍi, Kāḷi, Shasta or Ayyappa, and Kshētrapāla (corrupted into Kētrappa) are all Sanskritic. It is possible that these deities were originally non-Sanskritic and known by different names.

There is a passage in the ancient folksong, *dēsha keṭṭ pāṭ*, which may be translated as 'there is a Mādēva for every *nāḍ*, a Povvedi for every village, an Ayyappa for every *kēri* (section of a village), a Nāta (cobra-deity) for every *ōṇi* (lane leading to a Coorg house), and a Pūda for every *okka*'. The arrangement mentioned is too neat to be true, but it is not without a germ of truth. Usually, a cobra-deity is found in an *okka* while Povvedi and Mādēva are deities worshipped by a caste, or village, or *nāḍ*. The important point, however, is that every intelligent and educated Coorg interprets the above passage as meaning that the various village-deities are forms of Shiva or his wife Pārvati. This rule enables the chaos of the actual pantheon to be reduced to some kind of order. A similar rule prevails everywhere in India, and this has enabled Sanskritic Hinduism to absorb non-Sanskritic deities.

It is wrong, however, to imagine that it is always Sanskritic Hinduism which bridges the gap between *nāḍs*. The harvest festival, for instance, is in the main non-Sanskritic even though it

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779 touches Sanskritic ritual idiom at several points. There is also the
634 classic instance of Kaliyāṭanḍa Ponnappa (alias Ajjappa), the fighter, magician, and doctor, whose apotheosized spirit is nowadays worshipped by Coorgs in every part of Coorg.

769 The story of Kaliyāṭanḍa Ponnappa is not entirely fictitious, but
173 has a basis of fact. He was a descendant of the Kaliyāṭ *okka* in Kunjala village in Nālknāḍ, and very early in his life he seems to have gone to Malabar to study medicine and magic. After his return to Kunjala he became famous for his magical powers: he was said to have under his control the 'ten spirits of the underworld' (*pattu kūṭ pātāḷa*) which did what he wanted them to do. He was also a fighter, and he actually died while fighting the soldiers of Karaṇembāhu, the chief of Bhāgamanḍlanāḍ at that time. His friend and companion Boḷtu committed suicide after Ponnappa's death.

The spirit of Ponnappa caused headache in everyone. A famous magician was sent for and he had the spirits of Ponnappa and Boḷtu and the 'ten spirits of the underworld' imprisoned in a conch-shell. The conch-shell was buried under a stone in Malabar. But some time later an accident released the spirits from the conch-shell, and subsequently the spirits of Ponnappa and Boḷtu, and their common friend Kuṭṭapāla Māyila, all found shelter in the well-known temple of Sārtāvu (Ayyappa) of Makki.

[791] Ponnappa and his companions have found shelter in several temples in south-west Coorg. There are Ponnappa's oracles everywhere in Coorg Proper, but none may practise as an oracle unless he has been authorized by the chief oracle of Ponnappa in Makki.

[782] People in every part of Coorg vow to make offerings to Ponnappa when they are suffering from bodily aches. It is believed that Sārtāvu (Ayyappa) has conferred on Ponnappa the power to cure aches. There is an annual festival in honour of Ponnappa at the Sārtāvu temple in Makki.

769 Educated Coorgs point out that Ponnappa is not a deity, but
● 776 only the very powerful spirit of a great magician and doctor who, in addition, died while fighting. The spirit of Ponnappa was, to begin with, guilty of anti-social conduct, giving headaches to everyone. That was the reason for its imprisonment in a conch-shell. After its release, it sought and obtained the protection of Sārtāvu of Makki. It then no more caused headaches, but cured them instead. It was subordinated to a well-known deity before being worshipped.

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769 776 It is important to remember that Sārtāvu is Ayyappa, the son of Shiva and Vishṇu in the form of Mōhini. The lawless spirit of a magician-cum-fighter is tamed by making it subordinate to a deity who has been completely Sanskritized.

XII

182 564 782 The hierarchical idea inherent in caste expresses itself in a variety of ways at the festival of a village-deity. For instance, at the Kētrappa festival in Bēngūr, the fowls brought as offerings to the deity by members of the higher castes are decapitated by a Coorg, and the pigs brought by them, by a Paṇika. But neither the Coorg nor the Paṇika decapitates the animals brought by the lower castes like the Mēda and Poleya. The animals brought by the latter are decapitated by a Mēda.

Usually, the man who sacrifices the animal gets its head as his perquisite. The animal is then divided into two halves, one half going to the owner and the other to the village. Each *okka* in the village gets a share in the half which goes to the village. But the animals offered by Mēdas and Poleyas are not divided in this manner, nor do they get a share in the animals brought by the higher castes. That is to say, in this context, the village does not include the Mēda and Poleya. Nor does it include the Brahmin who does not sacrifice animals to deities.

182 564 773 The deities Kākkōṭ Achchayya, and Akkavva, according to the folksong, leave Malabar to seek shelter in Coorg. After crossing into Coorg they meet a Poleya deity, Kāryappa, whom they take as their servant. The three deities then go to Kākkōṭ village where they see some children playing. Kākkōṭ Achchayya and Akkavva possess Coorg children, whereas Kāryappa possesses a Poleya boy. In this instance, the caste-idiom is completely projected into mythology and religion.

776 182 The deities Kētrappa (m.) and Koḍli Povvedi (f.) are both recipients of offerings of non-vegetarian dishes and liquor. Coorgs explain this by saying that both the deities lost their caste on coming into Coorg. In fact there is an incident in the Kētrappa song giving an account of the change in the dietetic habits of the deity: while returning to Bēngūr from Malabar, Kallumāḍa Ayyaṇṇa, who was possessed by Kētrappa, put everyone to sleep while he climbed a *bainé* (caryota urens) tree and drank toddy from

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the pot at the top. His followers woke up before he had climbed down and demanded an explanation from him. Kētrappa (i.e. Ayyaṇṇa) replied that until then he was only receiving sandalwood paste and flowers,[1] but from then on he would receive instead 'blue-bubble toddy and crowing cocks'.

Deities have a tendency to adopt the customs of their devotees. It is natural then for the deity from Malabar to switch over to the Coorg's diet on reaching Bēngūr. But this diet is not the diet of the Brahmins. Coorgs explain the dietetic preference of their deities by saying that they 'lost their caste': a certain ambivalence can be detected in this attitude, an attitude which presumably prevails towards their own diet. They like non-vegetarian food and liquor, but at the same time consider vegetarianism as more ethical.

[1] Brahmin priests in Coorg, Malabar, and South Canara use sandalwood paste and flowers, among other things, for the worship of deities.

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custom exists everywhere in south India among Hindus. Water is identified with the holy Ganges, and such an identification teaches a Hindu to regard the Ganges as a deity. It opens a window on Sanskritic Hinduism.

On the way to Tala Kāvēri from Bhāgamanḍla there is an immense boulder called 'Bhīma's pebble'. It is said that Bhīma, one of the Pāṇḍava brothers, found a tiny 'pebble' in his dinner which he picked up and threw away. What was a tiny pebble to Bhīma is an immense boulder to ordinary human beings. Bhīma's strength was prodigious, and his strength, enormous appetite, and chivalry have made him the most lovable of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, the heroes of the epic, Mahābhārata. 'Bhīma's pebble' makes the epic more immediate to Coorgs and other Hindus in Coorg.

The mountain in which the Kāvēri rises is called Brahmagiri, and it is said that the god Brahma has settled down on top of the mountain. Brahma was in two minds as to whether he should settle down on top of the Brahmagiri mountain or a neighbouring one, and he finally decided on the former as it was higher than the latter by a rice grain.

While ideally the Kāvēri is sacred to every Hindu, actually it is mostly Hindus from various parts of south India, especially Mysore, Malabar, and the Tamil country who go on pilgrimage to the river-source on the first of Libra. Similarly the shrine of Subramaṇya is sacred to every Hindu, though actually only Hindus from the Kannaḍa- and Tulu-speaking areas visit it. But there are centres of pilgrimage such as the Temple of Venkāṭāchala at Tirupati in the Telugu country visited by Hindus from practically every part of south India. The temples of Mīnākshi at Madura and Rāmēshwara at Rāmēshwaram in south-east India are visited by Hindu pilgrims from every part of India. In continental India, too, there are several places of pilgrimage for Hindus from every part of India.

Deities too have varying 'spreads' even though ideally they are sacred to all Hindus. In fact, over a period of time 'spread' shows a dynamic quality: a deity who commanded the devotion of a king enlarged his 'spread' to include the territory ruled by the king.

Peninsular India is an area of enormous cultural diversity, but it forms a loose unity viewed in relation to continental India, just as India itself exhibits some unity when viewed in relation to the rest

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of the world. Certain ritual and cultural forms are found widespread over peninsular India: the *tāḷi* or marriage badge tied by the groom to the bride is found everywhere except among Coorgs. A married woman wears a vermilion mark on her forehead, and only she is entitled to a necklace of tiny black beads and black bangles and to wear flowers in her hair. The cult of the village-deities too is broadly similar.[1]

Coorg Proper forms a 'Region' along with Malabar and South Canara. The three areas mentioned have many similar rites, beliefs, customs, and habits. But within this 'Region', Coorg Proper seems to have more in common with Malabar than with South Canara. The ritual forms which Coorg shares with Malabar and South Canara, and the deities worshipped by them, usually come under Regional Hinduism, while the ritual forms and deities shared in common with Kannaḍigas and Tamilians usually come under Peninsular Hinduism.

Local Hinduism has a more restricted 'spread' than Regional Hinduism. The people of a village or *nāḍ* share a great many ritual and cultural forms in common, though membership of a caste frequently cuts across these alinements in the case of the top and immigrant castes. Castes like the Baṇṇa, Paṇika, and Kaṇiya share certain ritual and cultural forms with not only their counterparts in Malabar but with all Malayāḷīs. Similarly with castes like the Poleyas and Mēdas who are immigrants from the Kannaḍa country. The length of the period of residence of an immigrant caste, and its position in the caste system, are factors which influence the extent to which it has preserved its traditional culture.

The River Kāvēri is a manifestation of Pārvati, the wife of Shiva, and the devout refer to it as Mother Kāvēri in certain contexts. Coorgs regard the Kāvēri as their patron goddess: the Kāvēri Myth associates the river specially with Coorgs. Coorg women pleat their saris at the back instead of in the front as in the rest of India, and this feature of their dress is attributed in the Myth to the force of the floods which pushed the pleats of the assembled Coorg women to the back. This happened when Pārvati first assumed the form of a river, and Coorgs, men and women, were waiting for their patron goddess to appear at Balmuri, a few miles from the source.

Regional Hinduism often contains some Sanskritic elements, in which case it directly stresses Regional ties and, indirectly, All-India

[1] [THROUGHOUT PENINSULAR INDIA -- ANALYST]

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ankle and this enabled Saturn to possess him. Subsequently Naḷa lost his throne, was separated from his beloved wife, became deformed owing to serpent-bite, and finally ended up as cook to a king.

It is said in Coorg that Saturn jumped on Naḷa while the latter was standing under a *tāṇḍi* tree. Coorgs usually utter Naḷa's name when they have to pass under a *tāṇḍi* tree, and this is said to have the effect of warding off Saturn.

The above restrictions make the story of Naḷa, which is known to all Hindus, more immediate to Coorgs. The observance of common restrictions frequently marks off one community from another. Such observance can become a symbol of the community's solidarity and identity.

Coorgs, like other Hindus, regard the cow as sacred, and are opposed to killing it. They also abstain from eating beef. The cow has recently figured prominently in Hindu-Muslim relations and has come to be a symbol for Hindu solidarity and identity. Orthodox Hindu opinion regards the killing of cattle with abhorrence, even though the refusal to kill the vast number of useless cattle which exist in India today is detrimental to the economy of the nation.

Reverence for the cow unites Coorgs with other Hindus. It marks both off from other communities living in India.

Certain Sanskritic theological ideas have profoundly affected the lives of Coorgs. Ideas about *karma* and *dharma* are widespread among Coorgs, not only amongst the educated but also amongst the uneducated peasantry. The Coorg funeral song abounds in Sanskritic theological ideas: a man dies 'when the ration of rice kept for him by God Nārāyaṇa is finished'. After death, a bad man goes to hell (*naraka*) and a good man to heaven (*swarga*). A man is continually reborn till he attains salvation (*mōkshu*). The surviving relatives pray that the dead man may not be reborn either as man or beast, because being implies suffering. They pray that he may go to heaven and not return to earth any more.

V

Sanskritic Hinduism has a plasticity which enables it to absorb local religious phenomena. Sanskritic deities frequently undergo changes in the process of being localized. An example will make

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clear what is meant. The deity Kētrappa of Bēngūr is identified by knowledgeable Coorgs and others with the Vēdic deity Kshētrapāla (protector of the field). Whether there are any justifiable grounds for identifying Kētrappa and Kshētrapāla is a minor matter. What is of importance is that the two deities are so identified. Such an identification of a local deity with an All-India, Sanskritic deity, is very common.

In the Vēdas, Kshētrapāla is a deity presiding over every field, and he is invoked to grant cattle and horses, and to fill heaven and earth and plants and waters with sweetness. People pray to him for prosperity and wish to have him as a neighbour. An ox is sacrificed to him.[1]

In the course of 2,500 years Kshētrapāla has travelled to every part of India, and he has different attributes in different parts of the country. In Bengal he even changes his sex: he becomes Kshētrādēvi, or the 'goddess presiding over fields', and is regarded as a manifestation of Lakshmi, the wife of Vishṇu. As the goddess presiding over fields she ensures a good harvest.[2]

It is not necessary to give here an account of the transformations undergone by Kshētrapāla in the various parts of India. It is sufficient to note that in Coorg he loses all touch with the land. He is referred to as Kētrappa; '*appa*', which means 'father', being a common suffix to the names of gods all over south India, just as '*amma*' or 'mother' is a common suffix for goddesses. In Coorg, Kētrappa takes to a diet of 'blue-bubble toddy and crowing cocks'. People explain this by saying that he 'lost his caste' while travelling from Malabar to Coorg. The Brahmin priest of the Kaḍupālappa temple does not act as a priest to a deity who has 'lost his caste'.

Ayyappa is a Sanskritic deity who is very popular with Coorgs and it is clear that his character has changed in the process of becoming acceptable to his worshippers. In Sanskritic mythology he is Shasta, the son of Shiva and Mōhini (feminine form temporarily assumed by Vishṇu). Shasta is also referred to as Hariharaputra, or the son of Shiva and Vishṇu, and he is a very popular deity all along the Malabar coast.

[1] Macdonnell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, vol. i, p. 211; *Vedic Mythology*, Macdonnell, p. 138; W. Crooke, *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, vol. ii, p. 227. The absolute prohibition on the killing of a cow or ox is a post-Vēdic development.

[2] C. Chakravarti, 'The Saivite Deity Ksetrapala', *Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. ix, 1933, p. 237.

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● 776 177 In Coorg, Shasta is referred to as Ayyappa, or Sārtāvu, and he inhabits the jungles in which he wanders at night with his favourite pack of dogs. At night, in the jungle, he can be heard whistling to his pack. Votive offerings of representations of dogs and bows and arrows are made to his shrines. Some jungles are reserved for Ayyappa exclusively, and nobody may hunt or cut down trees there. Coorgs do not hunt on Wednesdays and Saturdays because Ayyappa hunts on those days. Formerly, liquor and fowl were offered to him by Coorgs after a successful hunt. At some Ayyappa shrines non-vegetarian offerings are made, whereas at others only vegetarian offerings are made. Brahmins are usually priests at the latter shrines.

[224] [551] Coorgs are fond of hunting, and every ancestral house has a pack of dogs which accompany their master during hunting. Ayyappa is extremely popular with Coorgs as the deity presiding over hunting, and very many Coorgs are named after him. His Sanskritic ancestry is not, however, recalled frequently.

Another Sanskritic deity who has undergone modification in the process of becoming acceptable to his devotees is Subramaṇya, who is, in Sanskritic mythology, Skanda, the warrior-son of Shiva. But, as we have earlier mentioned, in Coorg and in the Tuḷu, Kannaḍa, and Telugu countries, Subramaṇya is identified with the cobra which is regarded by orthodox Hindus as a deity. Ant-hills inhabited by cobras are worshipped at Subramaṇya's festival.

177 779 793 The absorption of local cults, rites, and beliefs colours everywhere Sanskritic Hinduism, which varies, in certain particulars, from one local area to another. The initial synthesis usually makes easier the later complete absorption of the local phenomenon in Sanskritic Hinduism.

In this connexion it is instructive to consider the attitude of the Brahmin, the representative of Sanskritic Hinduism, to the village-deities. His attitude is not something fixed and unalterable. It varies from region to region, village to village, and, frequently enough, from deity to deity in the same village, but when we consider a number of instances his varying attitudes fall into a pattern.

It was remarked earlier that the Brahmin priest of the Kaḍupālappa (Krishṇa as churning buttermilk) temple does not have any duties at the Kētrappa temple. But such complete non-co-operation

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offerings of flowers and fruit and, very rarely, through a non-Brahmin friend, of an animal to the village-deities like Māri during an epidemic of smallpox or plague or cholera. It is wrong to assume, as some do, that in the contact between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Brahmins have always influenced non-Brahmins, while they themselves have remained uninfluenced.

VI

The presence, within Sanskritic Hinduism, of a vast and ever-growing mythology, the worship of trees, rivers, and mountains, and the association of deities and epic heroes with local spots everywhere in India, makes easy the absorption of non-Sanskritic cults and deities. The caste hierarchy plays no small part in the spread of Sanskritization: not only do outlying communities signalize their entry into the Hindu fold by becoming a caste, but the existence of a sharply structured hierarchy which also permits groups to move up the social ladder acts as a powerful inducement for the lower castes to borrow the customs and habits of the top-most castes. The adoption of vegetarianism, teetotalism, and Sanskritization enables a low caste to rise in status in course of time.

The pantheistic bias in Hinduism also contributes to the Sanskritization of the deities and beliefs of low castes and outlying communities. The doctrine that everything in the universe is animated by God, and that all the various deities are only forms assumed by the same Brahma, makes the process of absorption easier. The village-deity who wants the sacrifice of animals and toddy is also one of the myriad manifestations of the formless Brahma whom the philosopher contemplates. The gods of the lower castes are not denied, but affirmed, and affirmed in such a way that their subsequent Sanskritization is rendered easier.

Another point that needs to be remembered is that the presence of Sanskritized local cults and village-deities in Hinduism makes easier the further absorption of local phenomena. Sanskritic Hinduism may be thought of as consisting of several layers, and the similarity of the lower layers to local cults and village-deities everywhere enables the latter to be absorbed. Once inside Sanskritic Hinduism the local rites and beliefs undergo Sanskritization rapidly and in a thoroughgoing manner.

The spread of Sanskritization being a matter of spontaneous

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maṇa towards his eldest brother Rāma, testifies to the utter strangeness of Malabar. It is so strange that people setting foot in it behave in an unpredictable way. This is doubly proved by Lakshmaṇa's great act of contrition immediately on returning to Coorg.

In the folksongs, deities are frequently reported as having migrated from Malabar or South Canara into Coorg. It is true that the deities are created 'beyond the Seven Seas, on the shore of the Milk Sea', but they subsequently migrate to a town on the west coast, whence they proceed inland, towards Coorg, to seek shelter. In the story of the two deities, Achchaiah (m.) and Akkavva (f.), brother and sister, at first wander all over Malabar seeking shelter. They are directed to Coorg by some deities whom they went to in their search for shelter, and as soon as they cross into Coorg, Akkavva tells Achchaiah, 'O elder brother, when people see us wandering about together they will think that we are husband and wife, and not brother and sister. Let us take an escort with us'. Achchaiah accepts his sister's advice and takes a Poleya servant. This incident raises the question, 'why did not Akkavva think of taking an escort before crossing over into Coorg'? It assumes that a person need not be particular about what he does in Malabar.

Educated Coorgs assert that Achchayya is a popular name for Vishṇu, and Akkavva for Lakshmi. This makes out Achchaiah and Akkavva to be husband and wife, and not brother and sister—the precaution taken by Akkavva in the story was in vain! It is only one instance of Sanskritization producing an inconsistency. According to the general rule mentioned in the '*dēsha keṭṭ pāṭ*', there is a 'Mādēva (Mahādēva or Shiva) for every *nāḍ* and Povvedi (Bhagavati) for every village'. This rule is interpreted in such a way by Coorgs that every male village-deity who is not said to be a form of Vishṇu is said to be a form of Mādēva, and every female village-deity who is not said to be a form of Lakshmi is said to be a form of Bhagavati, wife of Mādēva. After giving the popular name of a village-deity, Coorgs frequently take care to add that 'he is *really* Vishṇu (or Shiva)'.

The story of the seven deities is relevant here. Seven deities, six brothers and a sister, wandered all over Malabar in search of shelter. The first three deities, Kānyarāṭappa, Tirchembarappa, and Bendrukōlappa, found shelter in Malabar villages alone, while the remaining four went to Coorg in search of shelter. They crossed

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the mountains separating Coorg from Malabar by following the Pāḍitora Pass. The pass brought them to a mountain to the south-west of Nālknāḍ, and standing on top of the mountain they saw the whole of Coorg stretching before them. One of the four suggested that they should all shoot arrows from the mountain-top and find out which of them shot farthest. The arrows shot by the brothers fell in Ammangēri village while the sister's arrow fell in Pannang-āla. The sister had beaten the brothers decisively.

The sister then asked the brothers, 'Will you eat without salt if I cook food without fire?' Calculating that it was impossible to cook food without fire, the brothers readily agreed to the sister's suggestion. The sister put some rice into a bamboo vessel contain-ing milk and buried the vessel in sand which was very hot from the midday sun. By the time the brothers and sister had bathed and changed into ritually pure robes, the rice had been cooked in the boiling milk.

The sister served the insipid rice to the brothers who sat before the disagreeable food looking up and down. The brothers then took the rice in their hands and threw it up into the air saying, 'O younger sister, this is how hailstones fall during the monsoon.' The sister hit the brothers on their jaws with her ladle saying, 'O elder brothers, this is how lightning crashes in the monsoon.' The infuriated brothers got up from their meal at once, and washed their hands and mouths.

The brothers, beaten in the two contests with their sister, seem to have decided to take revenge by underhand means. I deliberately say 'seem to have', as in the version of the folksong I have secured there is no reference to any premeditated plan on their part. But their subsequent actions make such an inference necessary. There was another contest between the brothers and sister after the unsuccessful meal at the end of which the sister was tricked into put-ting back into her mouth betel stuff which she had taken out to show everyone. (For details see p. 104.) The brothers then told the sister that she had lost her caste because she had put back into her mouth something she had spat out. The sister was beside herself with grief: she beat her head, rolled on the floor, and wept bitterly. The eldest of the brothers then told her, 'Listen, younger sister, we did not deceive you, you are yourself responsible for your present plight. We are unable to help you. I advise you to settle down in Pannangāla village and become the deity of Poleyas, who will have

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a festival in your honour every year on the first of Aries. They will perform a dance, and offer you fowls. You possess them, and grant children to the childless.' The sister was inconsolable, and said that she could not bear the smell of Poleyas. But the eldest brother was adamant, and the reluctant sister closed both her eyes and assuming the form of a crane flew away to Pannangāla. In the latter village she possessed the Poleya servant of the Kartanḍa *okka* who tried to catch the crane. This deity is now known as Pannangālatammé (*ammé* means 'mother').

The eldest of the three brothers settled down on a mountain near the Pāḍitora Pass, and he is known as Iggutappa. It is said that on the first of Aries, when the festival of Pannangālatammé is being observed, Iggutappa's hill is covered with clouds, and it rains a little on the hill. Iggutappa, it is said, is very sorry for his poor sister who was forced to become a deity of the Poleyas, and he sheds tears for her fate. (Iggutappa is identified by educated Coorgs with Subramaṇya.)

The elder of the two remaining brothers settled down in Pālūr and is known as Pālūrappa. He is identified with Vishṇu. The last of the brothers settled down in the southern frontier of Coorg in Tirnelli and he is known as Tirnelli Pemmayya. He guards the frontier from Māri, the goddess presiding over epidemic diseases, and from thieves. He, too, is identified with Vishṇu.

Certain features of this myth may be noted. (1) The deities setting out from Malabar are related as brothers and sister. (2) They have a sense of seniority, common to both Malabar and Coorg. (3) As soon as the brothers and sister cross over into Coorg, conflict arises between them. The sister proves supreme, but the brothers manage to defeat her in the end by adopting unfair means. (4) The sister's defeat expresses itself in the caste idiom—a familiar idiom in Coorg folklore. (5) The transition from matrilineal Malabar to patrilineal Coorg results in the overthrow of the sister by the brothers. The brothers adopt unfair means to overthrow the sister, but having overthrown her, are not happy about her degradation. Iggutappa's mountain is covered with clouds which dissolve into rain on the first of Aries: the tears he sheds are not crocodile's tears, as the situation is essentially ambivalent. (6) Finally, the brothers all undergo Sanskritization. The eldest of them is identified with Subramaṇya, while the two younger brothers

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776 538 are identified with Vishṇu. This is no doubt inconsistent, but Sanskritization frequently produces inconsistencies.

177 776 561 Pannangālatammé is only one of several instances of deities losing their caste. Kētrappa (m.) and Povvedi (f.) of Bēngūr lost their caste too. The case of Povvedi of Bēngūr is interesting as her namesake in Balmāvṭi, a village three miles away, retains her caste, has a Brahmin priest, and accepts only offerings of fruit and flowers. The ubiquity of the caste idiom deserves notice: the deities of the lowest castes like Poleyas and Mēdas are not worshipped by the higher castes, and these deities bear the same relation to the deities of the higher castes which the lower castes themselves bear to the higher. The habits of some deities are occasionally explained by reference to the caste idiom. A deity who accepts animal-sacrifice and liquor has lost his original high caste; and sometimes such an explanation enables a Sanskritic deity to become the deity of castes which consume meat and liquor.

III

581 589 Marriage is a preferred condition among Coorgs, and a married man has a higher ritual and social status than a bachelor. A bachelor's social personality is not regarded as fully developed.

In the case of women, however, the contrast is not so much between spinsters and married women as between the latter and [292] widows. A widow wears only white clothes, and these clothes may not have a coloured border. The clothes and ornaments worn by a [301] married woman may not be worn by a widow. Certain ornaments which are associated with a married woman, like black glass bangles, necklace of black glass beads, and rolls of palm leaves worn as ear-ornaments, have become symbols of the married state. As such they receive ritual respect.

587 It is usual for young Coorg widows to remarry, and a remarried widow has a higher social and ritual status than a widow who does not remarry, though she does not have the same status as a woman whose first and only husband is alive.

589 769 Coorgs do not differentiate between a married woman and widow as thoroughly as, for instance, the Brahmins. Amongst the latter marriage and patriliny are bound up with certain theological ideas: a woman's husband is her god, and a son not only continues the lineage but releases his ancestors from a particular kind of hell

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Several competitions are held on the village green. The men are asked to shoot at a target (*kuri*). A variant of this is shooting at a target while running (*ōṭu boḍi*). Three stout plantain stems are planted very close to each other and men are invited to cut through them with one stroke of the Coorg sword. Coorg youths struggle for the possession of a coconut (*téngé pōré*). There is a high-jump competition, and then there is a form of putting-the-shot: the competitors are required to throw a round stone backwards over their heads. He who throws it farthest wins.

All the adult males in every *okka* in the village or *nāḍ* have to co-operate in the collective hunt that is held after the 'festival of arms'. Each *okka* takes its dogs to the hunt. Every *dog* gets a portion of the meat of the animal killed. Every man taking part in the hunt gets a share, and those who hit the game first and second get an extra share each. He who first hit the game is also entitled to the animal's head, while the one who was the first to touch the killed animal's tail is given one of the front legs in addition to his ordinary share.

A man who shoots at an animal must not only hit it, but must draw blood as well. Blood, in this context, is referred to as *nambigé*, which means evidence. Failure to draw blood is punished: thorns are drawn across the bare buttocks of the unfortunate hunter before the assembled members of the hunt.

It was mentioned earlier that a man who killed a panther was entitled to have *nari mangala* performed on the village green, whereas he who killed a tiger was entitled to have it done on the *nāḍ* green.

It was pointed out earlier that Ayyappa, the son of Vishṇu and Shiva, becomes the hunting god *par excellence* in Coorg, roaming the forests at night, whistling to his pack of dogs. Vows are made to him before a hunt, and offerings of clay images of dogs and horses are made before his shrines in the jungle.

The general preference for the martial way of life expresses itself in belief, ritual, and myth. For instance, the Sanskritic belief that an eclipse is caused when the serpent Rāhu tries to devour the sun or moon provides the basis for a characteristically Coorg story. A one-eyed cobra lived in an anthill and near by was a creeper which had put forth an enormous gourd in which lived a hare. A strong wind blew the gourd off the creeper, and it broke when it hit the ground, setting the hare free. The cobra went after the running hare,

[P 51]

CHAPTER IX

COORG (Contd.)

THE worship of the demons and ancestor-spirits constitutes the religion of the Coorgs. They have been influenced by contact with the Malayali, Canarese, Brahmanical and Lingayat superstitions. The Malayalis have made themselves indispensable at their demon and ancestor worship. The Tulus are their Pujaris. The worship of Mariamman (the smallpox demon) was introduced by the Mysoreans. The domiciled Brahmans of Coorg have succeeded in the introduction of Mahadeva and Subrahmania, and have temples erected and idols set up for worship. The Lingayats or Sivachars are also endeavouring to introduce the worship of Linga. Since the days of Vira Rajendra, Christianity was introduced in Coorg, and there is a Roman Catholic Settlement with a fine church at Virajpet, but Christianity has not made much headway in Coorg. [797]

Ancestor-Worship

The ancestor-worship of the Coorgs is based on the belief that the spirits of the dead hover inside and outside the Coorg dwellings and cause endless trouble in the absence of adequate propitiation. Each Coorg house has a *Kaimatta* (a building close at hand) under a tree in the fields or in the yard close to the house. This is a raised mud platform where carved stones representing the images of their ancestors are placed. Sacrifices of fowls and pigs are made to them. Sometimes the Coorgs become possessed of the spirits of the dead and express all their desires when they are sumptuously fed and given drink. The spirits of ancestors are believed to hand over their locality and become angry now and then. A male ghost is called *Karana*, and a female one *Sodalachi* or *Karanchi*. [346] [782] [787]

It is a belief among the Coorgs that ghosts cause trouble, and females even more so. The Sodalachis are ever inclined to smite children with sickness and sometimes even the adult males and females of the house. In fact they are ever inclined to do harm. With a view to appease their wrath, rice, arrack, milk and other delicacies are offered on various occasions during the year to them. Once a month, a fowl or two are offered at the *Kaimatta* to please them. In such cases a member of the community becomes possessed. He then puts off his head dress and walks in front of the house in a state of trance. While in this condition, the members of the family appear before him to represent their grievances. He makes some incoherent utterances which are believed to be emanations from one of the ancestors who has not been propitiated with offerings. At once he is treated to meat and drink, and neighbours are allowed to come in and put questions to the possessed. These gifts are called *Karana Baruna*.

796 The Coorgs perform another ceremony called ghost-mask (*karanakola*)
769 with the object of finding out the particular wishes of the ghosts. It is
787 performed every second or third year and occasionally also every year. For this, the services of a Malayali performer, a Panikkan or Benna, are requisitioned. At night he puts on, one after the other, five or more different costumes to represent the number of ancestors especially remembered at the [534] time. Arrayed in these different costumes, he dances to the accompaniment of a drum beaten by his companions and behaves as if he were possessed by [782] the Coorg ghosts. After each kola or mask, he leaves the house with a fowl, a coconut, fried rice and other eatables, and some arrack, and offers them in the courtyard to a particular ghost. Various questions are put to him by the members of the family and by the neighbours while he is in a state of trance. The food given him during the trance is called *Karana Barani*. The masks having been finished, a pin especially fattened for the purpose is decapitated in front of the *Kaimatta* and then taken up to be given to the performer. The rest of the carcase and bodies of the fowls [782] decapitated are taken to the house. In the absence of a *Kaimatta*, the pig offering takes place at the *Karanakotta*. Women also behave likewise, when possessed by an ancestral spirit. While thus affected, they roll on the ground, but they do not give utterance to oracular responses. Some- [785] times sorcerers, Coorgs or aliens, are invited to exorcise the ghosts. With the recitations of certain formulae in loud voice, they resort to flagellation. If it proves ineffectual, offerings are given.

Village Gods

776 Tradition has it that human sacrifices were offered in former times to
782 secure the blessings of Grama Devatas, Mariamma, Durga, and Bhadrakali, who are supposed to protect the villages or nads from all evil influences. These deities have their annual feasts among the Coorgs, but they pay special attention to Ajappa, Kaliat Ajappa, and Kuttamma in Kiggatnad, whose shrine is annually visited with gifts.

Every forest ground has its presiding deity to which an annual sacrifice or pork and cakes is offered. If it is not propitiated, the *Kadevaru*, the tending god, will withdraw his favour, and sickness and death among cattle will ensue. Besides, there are extensive forests called Devarukadu, which are untrodden by human foot and reserved for the abodes or hunting grounds of deified heroic ancestors.

Serpent Worship

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825 Traces of serpent worship or tree worship are found in Coorg. The *Natas* or spots on which cobras have finished their course of terrestrial life are the place of solemn ceremonies. To prevent any human being from setting foot on the hallowed spot, it is marked by a little stone enclosure.

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

During the month of November, a lamp is lighted every evening to Natas, and coconuts are offered as oblations.

Pilgrimage

The Coorgs go on pilgrimage to Irjatre at the foot of Lakshmana-tirtha fall in Kiratnad after the Sivaratri in February or March, and on the Talai Kaveri Jatra to the source of the river Cauvery in October. Amongst the Jatra beyond their country, those visited by the Coorgs are four, Subramania on the northern frontier of Coorg in December, Baitur in Malabar, in February, and Nanjangudu in Mysore which comes off in December. In exceptional cases they go to Benares.

Demon Worship

The Coorgs are demon worshippers because of the evil influences of certain malignant spirits, which can render their life more gloomy and wretched. The demons are called Kulis, who are believed to be capable of carrying away the souls of the dying members in a family. When any trouble arises in a house, and strange voices are believed to be heard in or near it, a *Kanya* (a Malabar astrologer) is consulted as to the cause of it, and he speaks of the influence of some *Kuli* who must have carried away the soul of somebody either in the house or in the neighbourhood. He suggests that a demon mask has to be performed for the liberation of the soul. It takes place once a year at Kutta, or at any other place once in two or three years.

The master of the house ties some money in a piece of cloth which is suspended from a rafter of the house as a pledge for the performance of the ceremony. Sometimes he ties his brass plate up there and eats his food on a plantain leaf as a vow. For the demon mask, either a Malayali magician or a true Ajjala Palya is sent for, and the ceremony is performed in the courtyard of the house owner. Demon masks are performed in the name of one or two of the five demons, Bhamundi, Kallugutti, Panjurli, Gulika and Goraka. The details of the ceremony are the same as those described for the exorcism of the ancestral spirits. The food of the performer in trance is called Kuli Barani. The liberation of the soul is thus effected. The demon that has thus committed the theft begs to leave the soul free. In the event of his refusal, the performer throws a handful of rice on the member of the house standing near him, and thus transfers the spirit to him. The spirit alights on his back, when he falls in a swoon, and is soon carried away by others into the house. The final act of a demon mark is the decapitation of pigs in front of the so called *kuzhikota* or demon abode. It may be near to or far away from the house or village. Fowls are sacrificed upon it. One pig suffices for house affair, but several pigs are required when a whole village is involved. The heads are given to the performers, and the trunks supply the house or village diviner.

[P 64]

CHAPTER XI

AMMA COORG

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[162] THE Amma Coorgs belong to the indigenous priesthood of Coorg. They numbered 666 in the Census of 1931, 336 being males and 330 females. Their
● [776] common name is Amma Kodagas, which would naturally signify Coorgs devoted to the worship of Amma or the goddess of the chief river of the
173 country, the Cauvery. The Brahmans invented a mythical origin which is not in accord with the Cauvery Purana.

As reward for his austerities the sage Kavera was blessed with a daughter, Kaveri, who was proposed to be given in marriage to Agastya, another sage who resided on the Brahmagiris. Kaveri did not accept the proposal. She assumed the shape of a river and fled from the mountain. Agastya in hot pursuit overtook her at Kadianad and persuaded her to submit their dispute to the arbitration of their friends. They called three families of Amma Kodagas and six of Coorgs. The former sided with Agastya and the latter with Kaveri. The Amma Kodagas decided that Kaveri should not be allowed to go. The Coorgs said that a woman should not be forced to marry against her will. This provoked Agastya, who pronounced a curse that the generation of Coorgs should become less, that their women should not tie their garments in front, that the sown rice should not grow, and that their cows should not give milk. But Kaveri Amma who was the patroness of the Coorgs counteracted the curse as well as she could, and said, "The Coorgs shall increase, but the Amma Coorgs decrease, the Coorg women shall tie their garments behind; the sown paddy shall be transplanted, the cows shall be milked after the calves have drunk". So saying, she tried to escape and on being held by Agastya by the border of her garment, she turned to the right and flowed
[778] rapidly away. Hence the place where this occurred is called Balamuri (turning to the right). A linga was erected at the spot by the Brahmans. It is
[788] yearly visited in the month of *November* at the time of the Kaveri feast
485 by Coorgs and others, who bathe in the river. Dodda Vira Rajendrar built here a rest-house, which, though built a century ago, is in tolerable preservation. Nothing more is known about the real history of the Amma Coorgs,
174 but a few facts may be given as evidence that they are the remains of an
793 ancient priesthood.

101 The Amma Coorgs observe in common with the Coorgs the great fes-
793 tivals of the country, and act as priests. They dress like Coorgs and at the
[796] same time wear the holy thread. It seems that they inclined towards the

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

796 And it appears, that the people can do very well without them.

796 361 Six days before the chief festival of tasting the new rice, all the males from six to sixty years, assemble on one of the Mandus of the Gráma, after sunset. Mandu is the name of the open public place in which business is transacted or festive games carried on. Grámas have generally three Mandus, one called the Punchâyati-mandu for business; a second, Dévara-mandu, on which dances are performed in the name of Bhagavati during the after-Huttari-days; a third, Uru-mandu (i. e. the Mandu of the village) on which the Huttari performances take place.

796 The time of these national games and dances is from sunset till after ten o'clock. The whole male population of the Gráma, except little boys and old men, past sixty, has religiously to attend. The assembly gathers gradually between six and seven o'clock. When the assembly is full, a space is marked out for the performances of the party. At a little [563] distance a band of musicians, two Holeya horn-blowers and [534] two Méda-drummers, sit near a fire, which they have kindled for warming themselves and their instruments. The horns are large and of brass. The drums are a Pare (large drum) and a Kudike-pare (pot-drum of a smaller size).

Three Coorg-men step into the centre of the open space and call aloud three names: Ayappa! Mahádéva! Bhagavati! The men stand in a triangle, their faces towards the centre, [796] their backs towards the company. Ayappa is the Coorg forest-god; Mahádéva, the Shiva of the Hindus, and Bhagavati, his wife.

796 526 The Chandukutti (ball-and-peg-play) now follows. The whole assembly takes part in it, the moon shedding a bright silver-light on the scene. A peg is driven into the centre of the chosen ground. A piece of rope is fastened to it by a loose loop. The people who make this preparation, seize some

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

529 On the following morn-
224 ing the youths assemble for a hunt in the forest, belonging to the village. Whatever game is brought down, is divided by the huntsmen in the following manner: the man who has killed the animal, receives a hind-quarter and the head, the rest belongs to the company. This day is followed by a great hunt of the whole Nádu, a repetition of the village-hunt, on a larger scale. The Keilmárta, to the taste of young Coorg, is the most glorious of all the festivals.

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5. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES AND POPULAR SUPERSTITION.

The previous description of familiar and popular Coorg life would be incomplete without an account of other *religious observances*, if such a name may be given to the lowest degree of superstitions, which take the place of the worship of God among this rude race.

a. The sanctuaries of a Coorg community.

Instead of a general description, a short sketch of the village "Arméri" in Beppunád, the centre of Coorg life, may serve as a specimen.

728
197 Arméri numbers only 25 Coorg houses, but is richly provided with idol shrines. First a Bhagavati temple in charge of Brahmans. In connection with this kind of worship there is a Mahádéva temple, and two Lingas in the jungle, which receive regular púja. Also two sanctuaries of Ayappa (the Shani, Saturn Pán? of Hindu mythology) have Brahmans for priests. Ayappa (Lord) is quite naturalized among the Coorgs.
[776] He is the great forest-god, a mighty hunter, to whom models
[532] in clay of dogs, horses and tigers are offered in abundance.
[793] In these observances the whole community joins under the
[782] superintendence of Brahmans. There are besides six places in which Chámundi or Raktéshvari (names for Párvati, Shiva's

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

rest is cooked in the house, to which the Keimada is attached, and is consumed by the whole community with a plentiful addition of liquor. At noon the ceremonies are completed. When Bárani only is performed, one of the strange priests does the whole work, but in the Kólas several are engaged. A peculiar kind of illumination is essential to both Kóla and Bárani. Some plantain trees are split into thin strips. These are placed on the ground in three or four layers, crossing at right angles, and forming a kind of network. Twenty-four or forty-eight or ninety-six such strips of split plantain-stems are used. Where they cross one another, spikes of a reed, called Wotté, are driven through them into the ground. At the upper end of these spikes, which are two or three feet high, pieces of cloth are fastened, twisted into wicks and well moistened with oil. When the whole net is thus arranged, two layers of strips are raised, one to near the top of the spikes, the other a foot lower. Between the crossings, plantain-leaf-pieces are placed, upon which quantities of rice, plain and fried, of arecanut, jaggory, etc. are put. When the ceremony begins, a few of the oiled wicks are lighted. At the pig-sacrifice all are kindled, and the whole square blazes up like a table of fire, without however consuming the offerings placed on the leaves, which are the perquisite of the performers.

Besides, every family has some spot on the estate, in a retired part of the jungle-land, where a sacrifice of a fowl is offered every year to the departed by the living members of the house. No strangers are permitted to attend on these occasions. A stone placed on a rough mound serves as altar.

On the day of *Sivarátri* a religious ceremony takes place in Mercara at the Rajahs' tombs, that of Dodda-Virájender being transformed into a temple, where the spirit of the hero is worshipped with the honors due to the saint or rather a god, for Virájender has been deified by the Lingaites. On

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

the occasion a large concourse of people, chiefly Sivácháries, collect round the tombs, to pay their respects; or, at any rate, to participate in the liberal charity, dispensed at the time from the Government Treasury.

The people of Coorg have also great faith in a certain *Kaliatanda Ponnappa* or simply *Kaliat-Achchappa*, the spirit of a Malayálam man, who came to Coorg, many generations ago, was naturalized, married a Coorg-woman, and established himself at Nálknád. He was a great magician, and long the dread of the Coorgs. At last he was shot near the Cutchéri of Nálknád taluq. Since his death his spirit has possessed men, who give themselves to the strange arts that he practised. A similar worship is still maintained in honor of Achanaik in Chickamundúru in Kiggatnád.

Higher even than Kaliat-Achchappa, in the estimation of all Coorg, stands a certain female devil, at Kutta, called *Kuttadamma*. Kutta lies at the borders of the Wynád. Kuttadamma has no temple. The sanctuary is under a tree in the forest. The Pújári is a young man, the only person left of the family, which has engaged in this worship. Large sums of money are annually sent thither by people from all parts of Coorg. Many vows are paid to Kuttadamma in behalf of sick people or of the dead. And whether a sick person recover or die, the sum vowed for his recovery must be paid; or woe to the living! Liberal presents are also given to the man in charge of Kuttadamma, to engage her services against enemies, who, they say, are distressed or destroyed altogether by the demon, in answer to the prayers of her priest.

Each Báne (parcel of grass or forest-ground) has a presiding divinity, to which an annual sacrifice of pork and cakes is offered. If this sacrifice be not made, or not properly performed, the *Káduvaru* (the tending god, i. e. the god watching over the cattle) will withdraw his favour, and sickness and death among the cattle will ensue.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

778 Besides the many groves set apart in each Nád for some object of worship, but chiefly for *Ayappa-dévaru*, there are some extensive forests, called *Dévara-kádu*, which are untrodden by human foot and superstitiously reserved for the abodes or hunting grounds of deified heroic ancestors. These forests are: the *Iggudappa-dévara-kádu* in Pádinalknád, the *Chómamale* in Katiednád and the *Iruli-báne* in Kuyingherinád.

82 Another annual sacrifice every house has to offer to a
• 776 peculiar divinity called *Gulika*. This is an invisible constel-
782 lation or star, belonging both to the order of planets and to that of the zodiacal stars (it is, as the people say, a son of
[791] Shani or Saturn). No mortal eye sees it. The astrologer only knows the Gulika and its power, especially over the sick. A stone is placed for the Gulika at the foot of some tree possessed of a milky juice. There the Coorg offers every year fowls, cocoanuts and a little brandy in a dish of plantain-
[761] leaves to his tutelary numem. In cases of frequent deaths in a family, a second Gulika, called *Mrityu-Gulika* (death-gulika) is worshipped.

778 Another object of solemn ceremonies are the *Nátas*, the
825 spots on which cobra capellas have finished their course of terrestrial life. According to Coorg lore, the cobra capella 1 ∧
lives a thousand years! When it has passed the meridian of its long life, its body begins to shrink and to brighten, till it shines like silver, and measures three feet or less at the age of six or seven hundred years. Still later, the reptile shines like gold, and is only one foot in length. At last it shrinks to the size of a finger. Then it will some day fly up high into the air, die and sink down upon the ground, where it
[791] disappears altogether. No man sees it, but, of course, the
[753] Kanya knows the important secret, which he will communicate for a consideration to the proprietor of the land. Should any human being, unawares, set foot upon the hallowed spot, incurable disease of the skin will break out upon his person,

1 ∧ [Errata: This should read "Cobra di Capella." See Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 493. — Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

754 787 692 Superintendent, who has to get out of the difficulty as best he may. By the Panchâyat's self-constituted authority the wizard, or the person who has employed sorcery against his enemy, must promise to abstain in future; and in many cases reparation of some kind or other is made. In the days of the Rajahs such crimes were often punished with death. The British Government cannot, of course, follow the precedent. 754 787 648 [683] By a matter of fact order (No. 32 of 1858) from the Honorable Court of Directors to the Government of India: "Such "an offence as sorcery ought not to be recognised by any "British tribunal. If a pretended sorcerer is accused of "really injurious practices against the person or property of "any one, he shall be tried for these practices and if found "guilty punished accordingly and not for sorcery. The pre-"tended exercise of supernatural powers should be in itself "an offence and should be punished as a form of Fraud."

787 173 [176] **d. Substitutes for human sacrifices and other peculiar rites.**

As among other Dravidian mountain-tribes, so also in Coorg, tradition relates, that human sacrifices were offered in former times, to secure favour[1] of their *Gráma-Dévatas: Máriamma*, *Durga* and *Bhadra-Káli*, the tutelary goddesses of the Sakti-line, who are supposed to protect the villages or nádu from all evil influences. In Kirindádu and Koninchéri-gráma in Katiednád, once in three years, in December and June, a human sacrifice used to be brought to Bhadra-Káli and during the offering by the Pánikas the people exclaimed "Alamma!" (álu-amma i. e. a man oh mother!) Once a devotee shouted: "Alallamma, ádu!" i. e. "not a man, oh mother, a goat," and since that time a he-goat without blemish has been sacrificed. Similarly in Bellúr in Távaligherri-múrnád of Kiggatnád-ta'luq once a year by turns from each house a man was sacrificed by cutting off his head at the temple; but

[1] [Errata: This should read "The favour". See Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 473 -- Analyst]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

by Virájender Vodeyar in 1821. By their side is a smaller tomb over the remains of an honored Guru of the Rajahs, Rudrappa, which was built by Devan Ponappa in 1834. The Mausoleums are situated at the northern extremity of the Mercara Petta (Mahadévapet) and enclosed by a high embankment. They are square buildings much in the style of Mahomedan edifices, with a handsome dome in the centre and four minaret-like turrets at the corners surmounted by Basavas. On the top of the dome is a gilded ball with a weathercock above it, and all the window frames are of handsomely sculptured sienite blocks with solid brass bars. A flight of stone steps, flanked on the top by 2 well carved pillars with representations of Siva, leads to an open platform all round the building. The inside consists of a covered verandah round one centre room in which two slightly raised slabs in the shape of a cross covered over with white cloth and daily renewed flowers indicate the sepulchres. A lamp burns continually and a Lingaite Pújári is in daily attendance upon the deified Dodda-Virájender.

In *Mádapúr* or *Jambúr* 10 miles north-east of Mercara, there is the ancient cemetery of the Coorg Rajahs' family. It is prettily situated on the banks of the Mádapúr river, but has no claim to architectural merit. The building is surrounded by narrow out-houses which crowd too closely upon it. It is about 40 feet square and nearly the same height and stands on an elevated base. It consists of two stories, the bottom one inclosing the sepulchres in a central apartment; the one above is of the same size as the central apartment, leaving room for a passage and a low balustrade all round. The lower story is ornamented with a large figure of a Basava sculptured in sienite and similar images adorn the capital of four small pillars placed at the angles on the top of the building.

Near the Kávéri, at *Holesálhalli* there is the *tomb of*

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Kávéri and a great number of other Dévasthánas and fine forests dedicated to sylvan gods, this division is the most unenlightened and uncivilised in Coorg. There are many jungle-people especially the Kádu-Maratties, who live on Kumari-cultivation (vide p. 108) and one tribe in the forests of Távunád, the Kádavas or Bodavas, whose women dress in Eve's fashion, but with the vanity of Eve's daughters change the leaves four times a day. The women never come out of the forest, only the men show themselves, covered with a coarse cloth. They are excellent marksmen with bow and arrow, and live on the chase, seldom working for hire. Their huts, which they frequently change, are of the rudest description, made of sticks and covered with Netti-Pai (leaves of the Netti palm). Nearly the whole population of Távunád consists of Tulu-gaudas; there and in Nálkanád Canarese is scarcely understood, the people speak Codagu, Tulu and Malayálam. 635 634 635 634 563

The ryots in Kuyinkéri-nád, chiefly influenced by the wealthy House of the Karanika, Kutteti Eyappa, are mostly Coorgs and much devoted to the Pálur deity (vide p. 174). But here as elsewhere in this taluq, the love of gain or, perhaps, necessity seems to overcome the superstitious scruples of the ryots; the venerated dévara-kádus (sacred jungles) which, having for ages remained intact, are generally the finest forests, are cautiously invaded by the natives' axe and planted with coffee; but to propitiate the fabled wrath of Pálurappa, Iggutappa, Maletámbirappa and Ayappa, the devoted planter pays from 8 As. up to 1 Rs. per Batti of coffee towards the worship of the despoiled sylvan deities; but with the disappearance of these sacred forests, the oblation will probably cease too! 635 565 776 [778] [782]

Padinálknád-taluq, being skirted by the highest range of the Western Ghats with the broad based Tatiandamol, at the foot of which the Nálkanád-palace is built, is watered by the upper course of the Kávéri with its numerous tributaries. 635 133

25: Whitehead M-3 (no date) 1921 AW1 India
KANADA AW10
COORG AW5

K 782 K [755] cause death, and in these cases only a slight cut is made, usually in the nose or ear of the animal, sufficient to draw a few drops of blood, which are smeared on the tool, as already mentioned. In cases of epidemics, blood is poured over the image of the deity supposed to be responsible for the disease.

C 782 776 *Coorg.* The relic of human sacrifice described above, in Mr. Ramakrishna Row's memorandum, would serve to show that in Mysore such sacrifices, at one time, formed a regular part of the worship of the village deities; and this is confirmed by the account given in the *Mysore and Coorg Manual* by Mr. Lewis Rice[1] of the worship of the grāma-devatā in Coorg, which is a hill country to the west of the Mysore State inhabited by a mixed population consisting of aboriginal tribes, a hundred and twenty thousand cultivators and artisans, who were formerly serfs but are now freemen, and a ruling class of Kodagas or Coorgs, who probably migrated into the country about the third century A.D. He writes:

C 771 782 "The essential features of the religion of the Coorgs are anti-Brāhmanical, and consist of ancestral and demon-worship. As among other Dravidian mountain tribes, so also in Coorg, tradition relates that human sacrifices were offered in former times to secure the favour of their grāma-devatās, Mariamma, Durgā, and Bhadra-Kālī,[2] the tutelary goddesses of the Śakti[3] line, who are supposed to protect the villages or Nāds from all evil influences. In Kirindadu and Koniucheri-Grāma in Katiyet Nād, once every three years, in December and June, a human sacrifice used to be brought to Bhadra-Kālī, and during the offering by the *panikas* (a class of religious mendicants), the people exclaimed 'Al Amma!'—'A man, oh mother!'—but once a devotee shouted 'Al All Amma, Adu!'—'Not a man, oh mother! a goat'; and since that time a he-goat without blemish has been sacrificed.

[1] Vol. iii, pp. 264, 265.
[2] Durgā and Bhadra-Kālī are names of Kālī, the wife of Siva.
[3] See above, p. 29, n. 1.